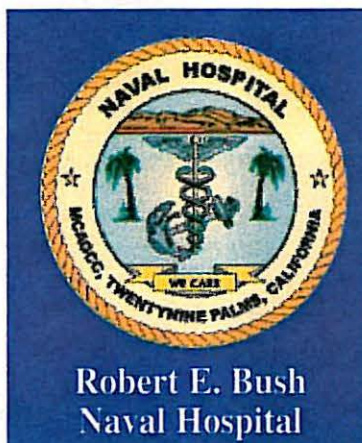




A traditional change of charge ceremony was held at NAWS China Lake on June 23 in which Lt. Cdr. Thomas Driver, left, relieved Lt. Cdr. Geralyn Haradon of charge of the Branch Medical Clinic China Lake. Please see page 5.



Robert E. Bush
Naval Hospital

Happy Birthday Medical Service Corps

Established August 4, 1947



www.nhttp.med.navy.mil

People of the Quarter Honored at Naval Hospital

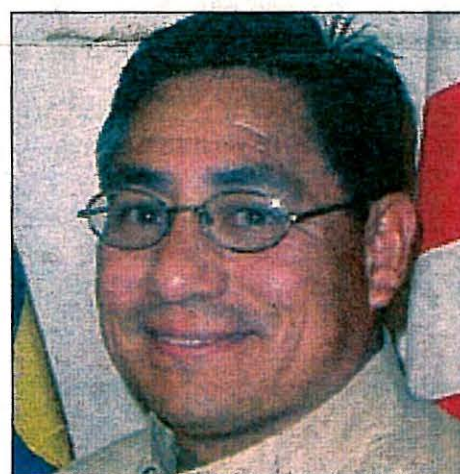
The Officer, Civilians and Sailors of the Quarter for the period of April 1 through June 30, 2004 were recently selected and honored at a special ceremony held at the hospital.



Ensign Ramaud Love, Head, Materials Management was named Officer of the Quarter.

His citation reads in part, "Serving con-

currently as Head, Materials Management and Resource Management Departments and Comptroller, you performed your duties with the highest degree of pride, professionalism and exceptional leadership and managerial skills. You managed a \$21M budget with a great deal of alacrity and attention to detail and orchestrated a thorough review of the annual contracts, resulting in the realignment of \$180K. Through your superb organizational skills, you revamped the command financial planning process, providing guidance to Department Heads and Directors. An excellent administrator, you authored and revised nine command instructions and standard operating procedures and conducted a detailed and concise management review of the EMPARTS process. Displaying versatility and team work, you served as liaison with 25th Marines in support of CAX-7, Command Remedial Fitness Coordinator, Command Bull Ensign and Wardroom Treasurer."



Federico L. Hernandez, Industrial Hygiene Technician, was selected as the Senior Civilian of the Quarter.

His citation reads in part, "While assigned as an Industrial Hygiene Technician, you performed your duties with the highest

Please see **HONORED** on page 7

Introducing the Hospital's New Comptroller

By Dan Barber, Public Affairs Officer
Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital

Lieutenant Junior Grade Kristin Kobi reported to the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital in May, replacing Lieutenant Donald Campbell, as its new Comptroller and Head, Resource Management Department.

As the Hospital's Comptroller, Kobi will be lending her expertise to the mission of the command by working in the Department of

Defense and Bureau of Medicine's financial and materiel management organization, budgeting, accounting, business management, equipment management and acquisition. Also she is involved in simplified acquisition procedures, contract development and administration. Kobi also oversees electronic commerce and managed care support oversight.

Kobi was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and spent her childhood moving throughout central and southern Ohio. Kobi's father was an Ohio State Highway Patrolman for 30 years and his job required her

Please see **COMPTROLLER** on page 6

Inside...

Postpartum Depression is used to describe a range of physical and emotional changes that new moms experience around the time of the birth of their babies. Symptoms of postpartum depression or 'the baby blues' can range from mild to severe. **page 3**

To view photos of the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital Superstars and Hard Chargers please see **page 4**

This Month's topic is on Eating Disorders—Most of us have heard recently about "Stars in the News" and their "treatment for eating disorders". I felt that now is the time to remind us all what eating disorders are, how to recognize them, and what to do to help yourself and/or others! **page 5**

Visit the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital OnLine at:
www.nhttp.med.navy.mil

Presort Standard
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
YUCCA VALLEY
CA 92284
PERMIT NO. 40

Commanding Officer
Naval Hospital Public Affairs Office
Box 788250 MAGTFC
Twentynine Palms, CA 92278-8250

From the Commanding Officer...

Problems with Referrals and Consults Receive Attention from Hospital Leadership and Staff

As many of our beneficiaries already know, last month we transitioned our Managed Care Support Contractor from Health Net Federal Services to TRIWEST Healthcare Alliance Corporation.

Many areas of this transition were seamless and transparent to you, however some elements were not. The staff of the Naval Hospital has received numerous complaints from you. Of particular concern are the delays, errors and complications surrounding referrals and consultations to network providers. Many of our beneficiaries have experienced delays in treatment, long travel distances and overall difficulty executing their specialty care in the civilian network.

Captain Robert J. Engelhart

I want to first extend my thank you for being patient and proactive about bringing these issues to us. I also want to reaffirm to you our commitment to you, and our Mission and Vision to provide the highest quality service to all those entrusted to our care.

I can assure you that my staff is working very closely with TRIWEST to correct these errors and to develop a better plan that will restore and sustain your confidence in TRICARE.

Please continue to keep us informed of our successes and failures in delivering care to you and your families. Please contact our Customer Relations Officer at 830-2475 and help us promote the highest level of customer satisfaction for you.



Published by Hi-Desert Publishing, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of Defense, the United States Marine Corps, United States Navy or Naval Hospital, Twentynine Palms under exclusive written contract with the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense, the United States Marine Corps, the United States Navy or Hi-Desert Publishing of the products or services advertised. Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use, or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. If a violation or rejection of this equal opportunity policy by an advertiser is confirmed, the publisher shall refuse to print advertising from that source until the violation is corrected. Editorial content is prepared by the Public Affairs Office, Naval Hospital, Twentynine Palms, Calif.

Commanding Officer
Captain Robert J. Engelhart, MSC, USN
Executive Officer
Captain Dianne J. Aldrich, NC, USN
Public Affairs Officer/Editor
Dan Barber
Public Affairs Assistant
HM1 Kenneth Florence

The Examiner welcomes your comments and suggestions concerning the publication. Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each month for the following month's edition. Any format is welcome, however, the preferred method of submission is by e-mail or by computer disk.

How to reach us...

Commanding Officer Naval Hospital
Public Affairs Office
Box 788250 MAGTFC
Twentynine Palms, CA 92278-8250
Com: (760) 830-2362
DSN: 230-2362
FAX: (760) 830-2385
E-mail: d.barber@nhp.med.navy.mil
Hi-Desert Publishing Company
56445 Twentynine Palms Highway
Yucca Valley, CA 92284
Com: (760) 365-3315
FAX: (760) 365-8686



Get more free time this summer.



All the support you need to achieve your commonsense weight loss goals is waiting for you at curves. And for the rest of the summer, it's free.

Curves

The power to amaze yourself.™

365-5157
57754 Twenty Nine Palms Hwy.
Yucca Valley

361-3065
73471 29 Palms Hwy.
Twentynine Palms

Join Now
Rest of Summer
FREE*

Over 7000 locations to serve you.

*Offer based on first visit enrollment, 12 mo. c.d. program. Service fee paid at time of enrollment. Not valid with any other offer. Valid only at participating locations. Offer valid 7/12/04-8/22/04

OVER 200 BULK HERBS!

Stress?

Insomnia?

Pain?

Fatigue?

Call (760) 367-6002

www.crystaldragonherbs.net

Crystal Dragon Herbs & More
73552 29 Palms Hwy.
29 Palms, CA 92277

FREE

Consultation on
alternative remedies!

Hours:

Tues-Thur:
10AM-6PM

Fri-Sat:
11AM-8PM

Closed
Sun & Mon

Exp. 10/31/04

Here's To Your Health...

Got the New Baby Blues?

Martha Hunt, MA Health Promotions Coordinator
Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital

Postpartum Depression is used to describe a range of physical and emotional changes that new moms experience around the time of the birth of their babies. Symptoms of postpartum depression or 'the baby blues' can range from mild to severe. Sometimes new moms need medications to help with these symptoms, while other moms may only need to talk to someone trusted and get help working through their symptoms.

Postpartum Blues symptoms can include: persistent sad or empty moods; sudden mood swings; loss of interest in usual activities; restlessness; irritability; excessive crying; feelings of guilt for no reason; feelings of worthlessness, helplessness, or hopelessness; or fear of hurting the baby or yourself. Postpartum Blues symptoms can also include: sleeping too much or too little; eating too much or too little; feeling fatigued and drained; thoughts of death or suicide; difficulty concentrating or making decisions; excessive forgetfulness; or vague physical complaints.

The Baby Blues are felt by as many as 75 percent of all women who have either recently given birth or recently experience the loss of a pregnancy. Symptoms of the baby blues are usually felt 3-4 days after delivery. However, baby blues may also be felt while you are still pregnant. If Postpartum Depression is left untreated, symptoms may worsen and may last for up to a year after delivery.

It's not known exactly what causes the Baby Blues. They may be caused by changes in

hormones in your body, stress over being pregnant or the delivery, feeling isolated from family and friends, and feeling simply overwhelmed over the responsibility of being a new parent.

A new mom can experience Baby Blues after the birth of any child, not just the first one. Also, she may feel them for one pregnancy, but not another. There is no way to predict which pregnancy will result in postpartum depression. Any woman is at risk of postpartum depression regardless of the number of children she has had or her age.

Postpartum Depression is more likely to occur if a woman has had any of the following: previous postpartum depression; depression not related to pregnancy; severe premenstrual syndrome (PMS); a non-supportive partner; or stress related to family, marriage, occupation, housing or other events in their life.

Self care for new moms should include getting enough rest! Take time for yourself and try to nap when the baby naps so you do not become exhausted. Ask for help when you need it! Ask your partner for help with chores and get emotional support from your partner, family and friends! Make an effort to get out of the house every day, even if it's only for a short walk in your neighborhood. Make time for just

you and your partner. Ask your primary care provider for help. Join a new parent support group so you can meet other new moms who are going through the same experiences as you.

Remember that you don't have to suffer with Post Partum Depression. There are people and groups in the community that can help. You can call either the Perinatal Case Management Program at 830-2822 or the Behavioral Health Department at 830-2724 for more information.

...The Baby Blues are felt by as many as 75 percent of all women who have either recently given birth or recently experience the loss of a pregnancy...

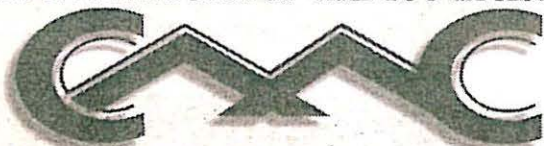
Find Your Future!

Thinking of a career in health care?
Think CMC!

At Copper Mountain College, right here in the Morongo Basin, we are currently accepting and graduating HHA, CNA, LVN and EMT students.

Our program is outstanding and is anticipating approval of a new RN program in the fall of 2005! Come grow with us and start a rewarding career in Nursing - now!

FALL CLASSES BEGIN AUGUST 16 - ARE YOU REGISTERED YET?



COPPER MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

"Be a part of the CMC family...Discover Yourself!"

Office of Student Services/Admissions and Records:

6162 Rotary Way, Joshua Tree, CA 92252

(760) 366-3791 or toll free at (866) 366-3791

Base class information: Dr. Arneson at the Base Programs Office at 830-6133.

Check our website for class information: www.cmccd.edu

FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE



CHARMING FAMILY HOME

A cute 3 bedroom, 1.75 bath home with a very distinctive floor plan. Completely refurbished in 2000. Looks 30 years younger. Master bedroom is away from the kids. The front porch has a view all the way to San Geronio Mountain.

\$99,000 MLS#21106802

PLAZA REALTORS

367-5839

5686 Historic Plaza
Twentynine Palms, Ca 92277

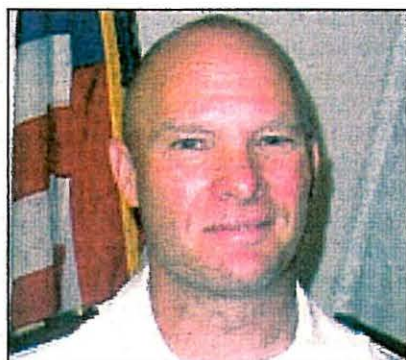


Larry Briggs
Broker/Owner





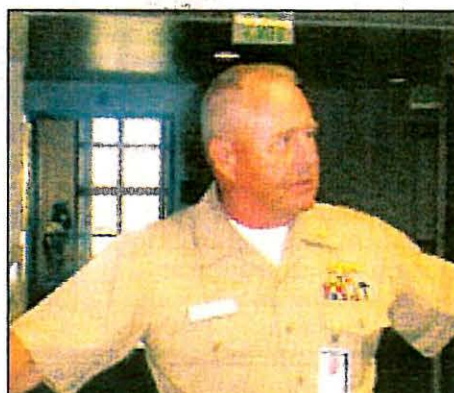
Super Stars and Hard Chargers...



Lt. Cmdr. Michael Allanson, receives a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal.



HM2 Jill Bankus, receives a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.



Capt. Frank Arko, receives his Honorary Desert Rat Certificate.



Lt. Cmdr. Mary Gardner, receives her Honorary Desert Rat Certificate.



Lt. Michael Mero, receives a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.



HN Amber Coute receives her first Good Conduct Medal.



Lt. Johnathon Hawkins, receives a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.



Cmdr. John Locke, receives his Honorary Desert Rat Certificate.



Michelle Reed, receives her Honorary Desert Rat Certificate.



A smile should last a lifetime!

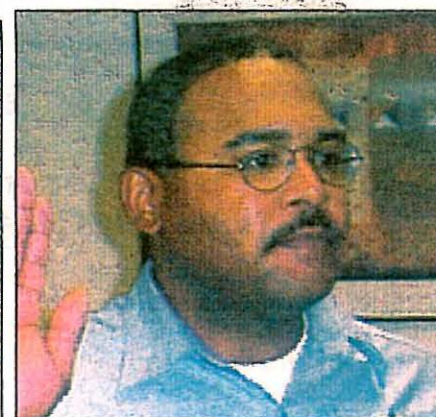


Laurence W. Dotson, D.D.S. & Associates

57337 Yucca Trail • Yucca Valley, CA 92284
Bus.: (760) 365-7691 Fax: (760) 365-7041



HN Mary Hyde, receives her first Good Conduct Medal.



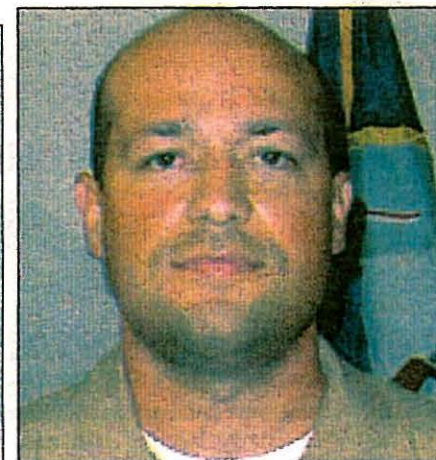
CS1 John Jamison, takes the oath of reenlistment.



Lt. Glenn F. receives a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.



HN Anne Lopez, receives her first Good Conduct Medal.



Ensign Frederick Matheu, receives a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.



Lt. Cmdr. S. receives a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal.

Change of charge ceremony held for Branch Medical Clinic

NAVAL AIR WEAPONS STATION CHINA LAKE -- A traditional change of charge ceremony was held at NAWS China Lake on June 23 in which Lt. Cdr. Thomas Driver relieved Lt. Cdr. GERALYN Haradon of charge of the Branch Medical Clinic China Lake.

Charlotte Deane, a relative of Haradon, sang the National Anthem. Lt. Patrick Niemeyer gave the invocation.

Guest speaker was Capt. Robert Engelhart, Medical Services Corps. "Lt. Cdr. Haradon is the face of naval medicine. She leads a wonderful crew who represent the best and the brightest in naval medicine. She has been a shipmate and a leader of this clinic for three year, and we will miss her," Engelhart said.

NAWS Commanding Officer Capt. Mark Storch presented the Meritorious Service Medal to Haradon for her service April 2001 to June 2004. "Lt. Cdr. Haradon's exceptional leadership, focus on the war fighter, manpower, readiness and quality of service had a profound impact on every member of the Naval Air Weapons Station and Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division. She immediately identified a need to restructure the Industrial Hygiene Workplace monitoring survey process that resulted in zero discrepancies on the Navy Occupational Safety and Health inspection," said the citation.

In her remarks to the audience, Haradon said, "It has been said that we cannot take care of our patients until we care about our patients. Poor healthcare more often is the result of an uncaring attitude than the result of ineptitude. Our success in this regard has been a constant source of pride for me. While here at China Lake, I have had the opportunity to witness the incredible impact we have on our people, simply by the passion we have for their health and well-being."

She acknowledged the efforts of her

team. "Our success at China Lake has been a team effort. Without the hard work of our military and civilian staff, we would surely fail. Hospital corpsmen have historically been the backbone of Navy medicine, and corpsmen of China Lake have lived up to that tradition. Thank you for your outstanding service and passion for our patients and our community," she added.

Haradon's next assignment is to the

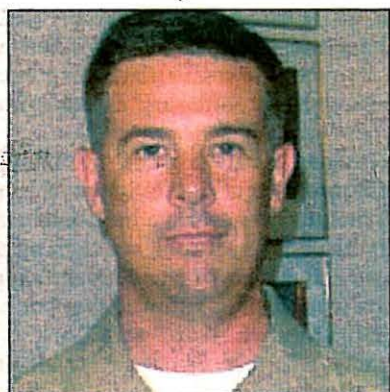
Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Washington, D.C.

After Haradon and Driver read the orders, Driver gave his remarks. He said he will continue to support the relationship the community has with the clinic. He said he and the clinic staff will work together as a team. "We're going to look forward," he added.

The ceremony closed with the benediction given by Niemeyer.



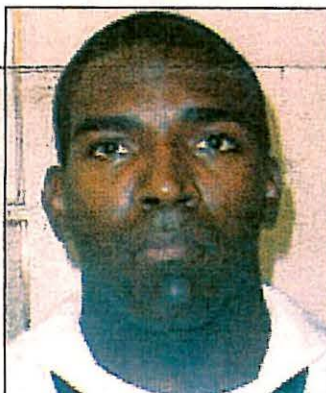
Left to right are Lt. Patrick Niemeyer, chaplain; Lt. Cdr. GERALYN Haradon, outgoing officer in charge; Capt. Mark Storch, NAWS China Lake Commanding Officer; Lt. Cdr. Thomas Driver, incoming officer in charge and Capt. Robert Engelhart, Medical Services Corps.



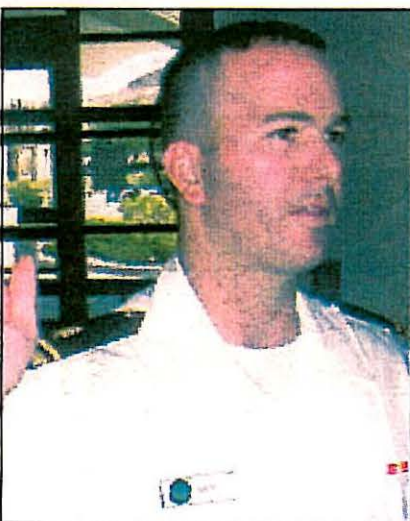
Lt. Cmdr. Greg Spurling, receives a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal.



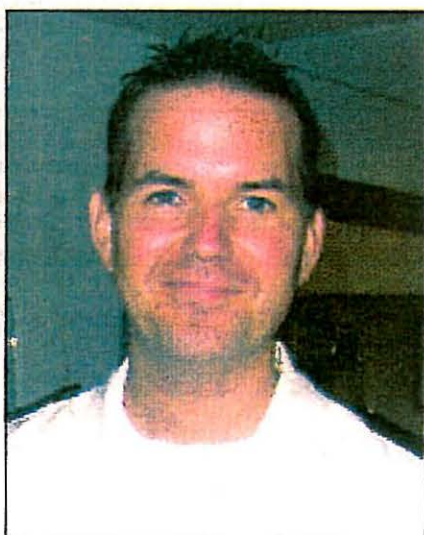
CS3 Faron Roberts receives his second Good Conduct Medal.



HM2 Dempsey Tomblin receives his third Good Conduct Medal.



Lt. Michael Mero, takes the oath during his recent promotion ceremony.



Lt. Peter Yan, receives the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.



HI-DESERT PHYSICAL REHABILITATION GROUP, INC.

- PHYSICAL THERAPY
- OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
- SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

Two Convenient Locations To Serve You:

YUCCA VALLEY

56299 29 Palms Hwy
Yucca Valley, CA
369-1743

29 PALMS

5930 Adobe Rd.
Twentynine Palms, CA
367-1743

Hours:
Mon-Thur.
7:30AM-5PM
Fri. 7:30AM-2PM

www.hdprg.com

Did you know that you have the right to choose your therapist? You can have the best therapy right here in town!



COMPTROLLER...

continued from page 1

mily to move often due to his transfers and promotions.

Kobi graduated in 1997 from Bloom Carroll High School in Lancaster, Ohio, where she participated in volleyball, basketball, softball, student council, band and 4-H. Following high school, she attended the Ohio University, (OU) where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Health Services Administration in 2000 with a minor in Business and Communication, and a Master of Health Care Administration in 2002.

"In college I was active in several professional student organizations, was a member of the OU bass fishing club, played on several intramural sport teams, was a resident advisor, as a teacher's aide and was a student member in the American College of Healthcare Administrators (ACHE)," said Kobi.

"During summer breaks from school I was able to work in healthcare administration at the Ohio State University Medical Center in Columbus, Ohio and at Fairfield Medical Center in Lancaster, Ohio," said Kobi.

"Upon completion of my MHA coursework in 2002 I moved to Savannah, Georgia where I completed my graduate residency at the Memorial Health University Medical Center, a 530 bed tertiary hospital. Throughout my residency I performed as an Assistant Hospital Administrator for their Women's and Children's Services, their Health and Wellness program and their new alternative medicine program the Chopra Center. I also had the opportunity to represent Memorial Health as their Loaned Executive to the United Way campaign. I was able to work directly with several major industries and businesses throughout the Coastal Empire of Savannah to raise contributions for the United Way," said Kobi.

Kobi received her Navy commission as a Medical Service Corp officer in October 2003. She completed Officer Indoctrination School (OIS) in December 2003 and immediately reported to Naval Health Care New England as the Department Head of Fiscal and Materials Management for both the Branch Medical Clinic Portsmouth, New Hampshire and the Branch Medical Clinic Brunswick, Maine. During this tour of duty, she completed the Financial and Materiel Management Training Course (FMMTC) in March 2003.

Kobi didn't discover the opportunities of a naval career until her junior year in college. "I found myself after college with a solid education; however I was lacking the substantial job experience necessary to land the job of my dreams. It wasn't until my junior year of

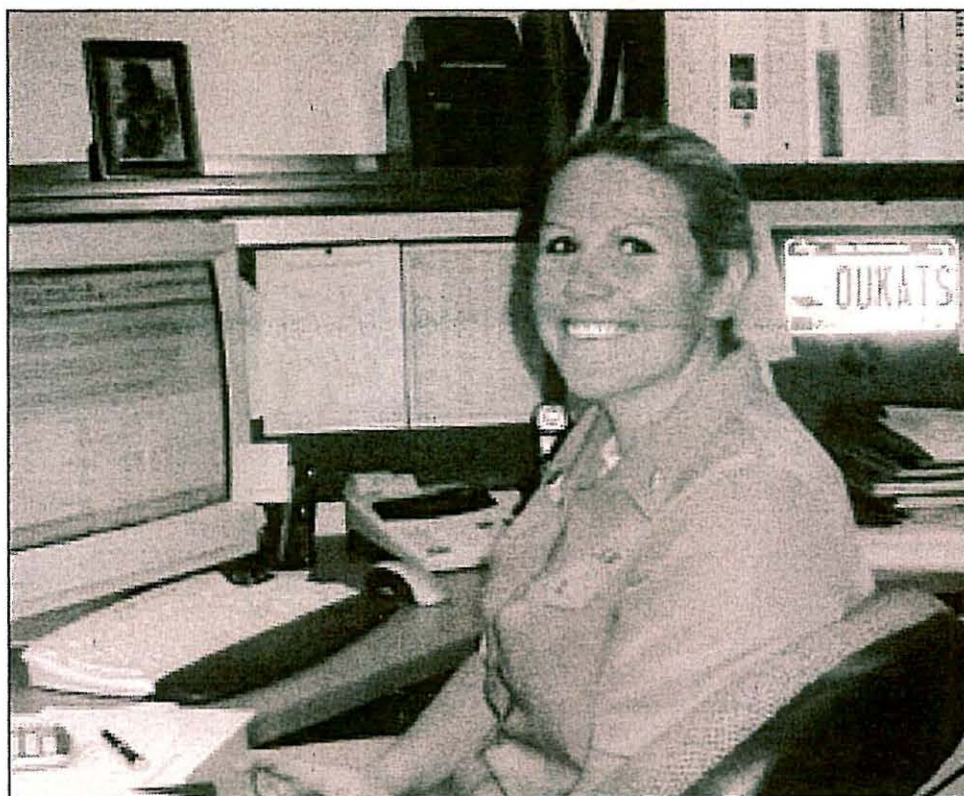
college when I attended my first American College of Healthcare Administrators (ACHE) conference that I even knew that there were military career opportunities for healthcare administrators. While completing my graduate residency I was recruited and became aware of all of the benefits and opportunities the Navy had to offer and couldn't pass up the opportunity."

Kobi's most memorable Navy experience to date is when she and a group of friends from OIS went to New York City to get a picture in uniform in front of the Statue of Liberty. "Although I had only been in the Navy for several months it was such a memorable experience because we could not walk more than a city block without someone coming up to us thanking us for serving our country. Literally we had dozens of people make supportive comments to us in one afternoon. It was such a great feeling knowing that our country is so supportive of the military and thankful for the jobs we all do," said Kobi.

Kobi's philosophy for life and leadership is simply, "To take advantage of all of the unique opportunities that come my way and want to encourage all of my staff to do the same. I try to lead by example and always stay optimistic about things. A positive attitude is contagious and I try to make the resources department a fun and interesting place to work."

Kobi's goals for the future are to gain experience and knowledge by successfully completing this tour of duty and to aspire to one day becoming a Director for Administration and Executive Officer.

When not busy at work, Kobi enjoys competing in many types of team and individual sports, hiking, and camping. She is also a big fan of both college and professional hockey and football. She has completed two triathlons and is anxious to get involved in them again.



Ayad M. Gharghoury, M.D.



•Privileges at all 3 area hospitals

•Specializing in Internal Medicine and Lung Diseases (Asthma, Emphysema, Cancer)

•Smoking cessation assistance

Accepting New Patients

**58383 29 PALMS HWY., STE. 100
YUCCA VALLEY, CA 92284
PHONE (760) 228-5864
FAX (760) 365-9184**

Save and Share Your Daily memories with...

COLOR COPIES *at VIP!*

- High Speed Copies
- Self Serve Copies
- Quality Printing
- Graphics • Labels
- Invitations • More!

VALLEY INDEPENDENT PRINTING

**AND COPY CENTER
7333 APACHE TR.
YUCCA VALLEY
365-6967**

Honored...

Continued from page 1

degree of pride and professionalism. Utilizing superb organizational skills, you performed a variety of tasks, including environmental sampling, in-house analysis of industrial contaminants, identification of chemical and physical hazards in the workplace, instrument calibration and maintenance of 89 pieces of equipment estimated at over \$500K. The professional knowledge and resourcefulness you displayed, led to a 20% savings in annual equipment calibration costs and over \$1600K saved in new equipment purchases. You stepped up to the plate while the Division was undermanned and took on additional work, ensuring all tasks were completed timely and efficiently."

Petty Officer 1st Class (FMF) Juan C. Johnson, Leading Petty Officer, Manpower Management Department, was selected as the Senior Sailor of the Quarter.



His citation reads in part, "As Leading Petty Officer, Manpower Management Department, your superior professional knowledge, superb leadership and commitment to teamwork were evidenced by your outstanding management of eight command level collateral duties. Your outstanding initiative and exceptional administrative skills were pivotal in achieving 98% operational readiness for over 380

staff members. Your personal dedication and efficient use of personnel resources portrayed the command in a positive light by directly facilitating medical support for over 100 training evolutions. In addition, you expertly coordinated security clearances, immunizations, uniforms, and pre-deployment briefs to ensure personnel were properly prepared to deploy to 'Operation Iraqi Freedom'."

Victoria A. White, Behavioral Clinic Receptionist, has been named as the Civilian of the Quarter.

Her citation reads in part, "While assigned as the Behavioral Clinic Receptionist, you consistently performed

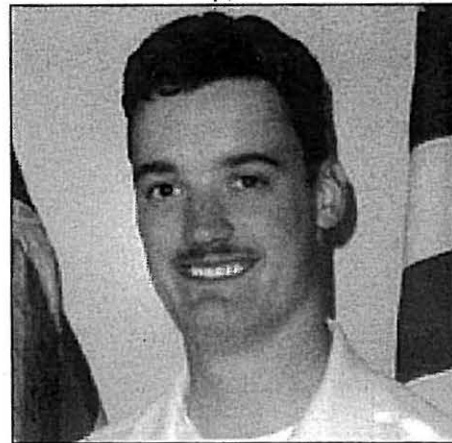


your demanding duties in an exemplary manner. You were responsible for the smooth transition to a new telephone messaging and booking system. Your exceptional knowledge, customer service skills and uncompromising professionalism were unsurpassed, even during times of high stress, last minute changes, and days of heavy telephone messages. Using your compassionate and friendly nature, and professional acumen, you eagerly and willingly assisted patients who were in extreme emotional distress, kept them calm and diffused potential crises. A true team player, you were always willing to help other departments in need, assisting as the 'frontline' for many of our customers."

Petty Officer 3rd Class Thomas J. Alford, Leading Petty Officer, Pediatric Medicine Clinic, has been named as the Junior Sailor

of the Quarter.

His citation reads in part, "As Leading Petty Officer, Pediatric Medicine Clinic, you demonstrated sound judgment and



superior leadership. Utilizing your professional knowledge and exceptional clinical skills, you supervised and trained two junior Corpsmen, one Licensed Vocational Nurse and two Medical Clerks. Through your superb organizational and managerial skills, you created ready-to-use handbooks to assist in the high volume of immunizations. Committed to command and community activities, you were a member of the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Committee and the Command Color Guard and volunteered to prepare packages for units deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In addition, you improved and expanded your self-devel-

opment education by attending college courses."



Hospitalman Domingo R. Duke, Branch Medical Clinic China Lake, has been selected as the Blue Jacket of the Quarter.

His citation reads in part, "During this time, you consistently performed your duties with the highest degree of pride and professionalism. You efficiently completed more than 25 maintenance work requests and self-help projects, saving the command more than \$1,100 during the quarter. You reorganized the processing and distribution of linen, ensuring quality and availability for patient care. Additionally, you streamlined the maintenance and upkeep of the command vehicles, significantly improving their cleanliness and appearance, as well as preventing mechanical breakdowns."

Serving Our Neighbors is our #1 Priority!

**Hassle Free
Prescription Service
& We Are Always
Open For Business**

**We will match
or beat any
price in town!**

- Prescription Express Service
- No Automated Systems During Our Hours of Operation and we accept Most Insurance Plans
- Drive thru for your convenience available
- Please bring in prescription bottle
- Fast, Courteous & Personal Service

Serving the Hi-Desert for Over 22 years!

Here you are in & out with your prescription as fast as we can fill them. No 4 hr waiting periods!



**760-365-7621
Fax - 365-7622**

Hours:
M-T 9 am- 5:30 pm
F-9 am- 5:00 pm
Closed:
Saturday & Sunday

Avalon Pharmacy
58471 29 Palms Hwy #301, Yucca Valley, CA 92284

Amalia A. Geller, M.D.

CHILD NEUROLOGY

**Autism • Seizure Disorders
Cerebral Palsy • Migraines
Behavior-Sleep Problems**



555 Tachevah Drive
Bldg. 1 East, Ste. 104
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Office: (760) 325-4478 • Fax: (760) 327-3944

Medical Minute...

What are Eating Disorders, How Do We Recognize Them?

LT Catherine Durham, FNP
Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital

This Month's topic is on Eating Disorders. Most of us have heard recently about "Stars in the News" and their "treatment for eating disorders". I felt that now is the time to remind us all what eating disorders are, how to recognize them, and what to do to help yourself and/or others!

How can you tell if you or someone you know has an eating disorder? Over five million American men and women of all ages, race and income levels have eating disorders. Bulimia nervosa is an eating disorder where a person binges, or eats a large amount of food all at once and then purges, or forces themselves to vomit, takes laxatives, or diuretics (water pills). Starving yourself by eating very little or nothing at all is another eating disorder called anorexia nervosa. People who have this condition can have a strong fear of body fat and weight gain. Binge eating disorder happens when a person cannot control her or his desire to overeat and often keeps the extreme eating a secret. Unlike bulimia, with binge eating disorder, a person does not purge her or his food. Extreme exercise to control weight is now being looked at by experts as another type of eating disorder.

Women make up more than ninety percent of people with eating disorders. Women may be more at risk for eating disorders because of a desire to have the "ideal" figure often shown in the popular media (TV, magazines, movies). As women, we need to like ourselves the way we are. While the exact cause of eating disorders is unknown, personality, genetics, environment and body chemistry may play a role in developing one. An eating disorder is a severe illness that requires help from a health care provider, the sooner the better.

What is anorexia?

People with anorexia are obsessed with being thin. They don't want to eat, and they are afraid of gaining weight. They may constantly worry about how many calories they take in or how much fat is in their food. They may take diet pills, laxatives or water pills to lose

weight. They may exercise too much. Anorexics usually think they're fat even though they're very thin. People with anorexia may get so thin that they look like they're sick.

What is bulimia?

Bulimia is eating a lot of food at once (called bingeing), and then throwing up or using laxatives to remove the food from the body (called purging). After a binge, some bulimics fast (don't eat) or overexercise to keep from gaining weight. People with bulimia may also use water pills, laxatives or diet pills to "control" their weight. People with bulimia often try to hide their bingeing and purging. They may hide food for binges. Bulimics are usually close to normal weight, but their weight may go up and down.

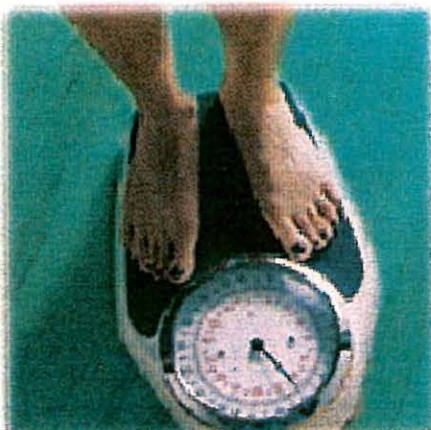
What's wrong with trying to be thin?

It's healthy to watch what you eat and to exercise. What isn't healthy is worrying all the time about your weight and what you eat. People with eating disorders do harmful things to their bodies because of their obsession about their weight. If it isn't treated, anorexia can cause the following health problems:

- * Stomach problems
- * Heart problems
- * Irregular periods or no periods
- * Fine hair all over the body, including the face
- * Dry, scaly skin

If it isn't treated, bulimia can cause the following health problems:

- * Stomach problems
- * Heart problems
- * Kidney problems



- * Dental problems (from throwing up stomach acid)
- * Dehydration (not enough water in the body)

Can eating disorders be treated?

Yes. For anorexics, the first step is getting back to a normal weight. If you're malnourished or very thin, you may be put in the hospital. Your doctor will probably want you to see a dietitian to learn how to pick healthy foods and eat at regular times. For both anorexics and bulimics, family and individual counseling (talking about your feelings about your weight and problems in your life) is helpful.

Why are eating disorders dangerous?

Eating disorders can cause serious medical problems, and they can even kill you. They can damage your heart, skin, muscles, teeth, and stomach. If you have an eating disorder, you might develop a condition called osteoporosis (say: oss-tee-oh-poor-oh-sis), where your bones weaken and break very easily. You might also develop a serious mental illness.

What are the symptoms of eating disorders?

If you have an eating disorder, you will probably spend a lot of time worrying about how you look. You might feel guilty when you eat or think you haven't exercised enough. You might feel bad about yourself when you think you weigh too much. Other people might tell you that you have lost too much weight, even though you think you weigh too much.

You might feel tired. If you are a woman, you might stop having periods. Fine hair might start growing on your body. If you use water pills or laxatives to lose weight, you might get muscle cramps or have heart palpitations.

How will my doctor know if I have an eating disorder?

Your doctor will talk to you and your family. You will be asked questions about how you feel about yourself, what you eat, and how much you exercise. Your doctor will give you a physical exam and might order blood tests or other tests. If your doctor thinks you have an eating disorder, you might be referred to a specialist so you can get the treatment you need. Good nutrition and psychologic counseling can help you recover from an eating disorder.

Where can I learn more about eating disorders?

You can talk to your doctor if you think that you or someone you care about has an eating disorder.

You can also contact the following organizations:

National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders (ANAD)
P.O. Box 7
Highland Park, IL 60035
Telephone: 1-847-831-3438
Fax: 1-847-433-4632
Web site: www.anad.org
The National Eating Disorders Association
603 Stewart St., Suite 803
Seattle, WA 98101
Telephone: 1-206-382-3587
Web site: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Coming Next Month: Back-To-Fitness!

What are the warning signs?

The following are possible warning signs of anorexia and bulimia:

- * Unnatural concern about body weight (even if the person is not overweight)
- * Obsession with calories, fat grams and food
- * Use of any medicines to keep from gaining weight (diet pills, laxatives, water pills)

More serious warning signs may be harder to notice because people who have an eating disorder try to keep it secret. Watch for these signs:

- * Throwing up after meals
- * Refusing to eat or lying about how much was eaten
- * Fainting
- * Over-exercising
- * Not having periods
- * Increased anxiety about weight
- * Calluses or scars on the knuckle (from forced throwing up)
- * Denying that there is anything wrong